

NEWSLETTER AUGUST 2008

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FIAT 500
Affiliated to: FIAT 500 • CLUB ITALIA



enthusiasts
club GB

ORGANISING TEAM

Chairman: Alisdair Shepherd Tel: 01903 782955
al@v1tld.co.uk

**Secretary/
Editor:** Jan Di Carlo Tel: 01252 613335
Mob: 07730 402202
11 Fairmile, Fleet, Hampshire, GU52 7UT
italcorsa@googlemail.com

Events: Vanessa Gathercole Tel: 01344 772970
v@gathercolevg.freemove.co.uk

Technical Advisor: James Di Carlo Tel: 01252 613335
italcorsa@googlemail.com

Committee: John Jenkins Tel: 02380 730765

PLEASE HELP !!!!!

**WE NEED HELP WITH RUNNING THE CLUB, IT WON'T TAKE
UP MUCH OF YOUR TIME,**

WANTED:

- ❖ **CLUB SECRETARY**
- ❖ **TREASURER**
- ❖ **GENERAL ORGANISERS**
(OR SHOULD I SAY, GENERAL DOGSBODIES!!)

For more details please contact any of the above organisers

from the **EDITORIAL** desk (by Jan):

Well what a busy year it has been so far, with meets or classic car shows just about every weekend for the past few months. It is such a shame that the weather has been so unkind and put so many people off taking their cars out.

As you will see in the events calendar we are having a “**KENT WEEKEND**” realising that there were 2 events in almost the same area over the 6th/7th September, I thought it would be fun to make a weekend of it. Jimmy and I will be staying in Farnborough over night, so, if you cant make either of the events – but I hope you can make at least one – perhaps we could meet up for a meal in the evening.... Please let me know.

In this magazine, I have included a few articles on events that we have take part in, I feel sure that lot of other members have gone to other events, perhaps some of you would like to write something about your activities.

Jimmy and I had a super time in Italy, first we joined Jim at Vernasca, and then we went onto the *Fiat 500 – Club Italia*'s annual event in Garlenda. This gave us a chance to chat with their committee about our *Twining* with their club. They were very welcoming and wished us good luck with our venture. In future I will be printing details of some of their events, so if anyone is in Italy and wants to see how they run their meetings, please contact me and I will let you know if something is going on near where you are staying.

Oh, how I wish I had more space in each magazine, Jimmy and I have lots to write about the Fiat 500, other clubs etc.... perhaps we will have space in the winter mag's when not so much is going on.

Finally, I have continued the profiles of our club organisers, with a profile of Vanessa our events organiser.

Jan. Editor



Deadline for next magazine: 20th each month.

Front cover: Jim Schofield's car waiting at the start of the 2008 Vernasca Hill Climb

Rear Cover: In the Pink, Amanda's daughters with the trophy they won on the

Frimley Park run.

EVENTS 2008

AUGUST

Sun 24th

EGHAM ROYAL SHOW WHITHILL LANE, EGHAM, SURREY

Something for everyone, old or young. All the usual traditional favourites including Punch & Judy, Horticultural marquee, Auto jumble, Craft marquee and of course the Classic Car display. Sounds like a great day out. If your car isn't on the road, come anyway and say hello to us. For more details contact: Jan on 01252-613335 or 07730 402202 or italcorsa@googlemail.com

As we are getting close to the date, and if you want to enter your car please contact the show organisers direct:

Douglas Newton. Tel/Fax 01908 511894 or tiagol@talk21.com

SEPTEMBER

****** KENT EVENT WEEKEND ******

So far most of our events this year seem to have been in the Surrey/Hampshire area, here is a chance for members in the south east to meet and get together. Come to one event or both, we would like to see you.

If there is enough interest we might try to arrange a group meal on the Saturday evening.

Sat 6th

Village Fete & Classic Car Show Farnborough Village, Kent. 12am to 17.00hrs

This is a small village fete, but with all the usual traditional activities including Falconry, Morris dancing etc. Or just a chance to sit by our cars, have the public admire them and gossip

Contact: Jan on 01252-613335 or 07730 402202 italcorsa@googlemail.com
OR

Neil (club member) Tel: 01689 855869 or neil.clark77@ntlworld.com

****** FEEL LIKE MAKING A WEEKEND OF IT ******

Then also join other members at:

Sun 7th

Italian Car Picnic Honnington Farm, Vauxhall Lane, Southborough, Nr Tunbridge Wells, TN4 0XD 11.30am – 4.00pm

In aid of Kent Air Ambulance, this will be an informal day out, bring your own picnic and relax with other Italian car owners. See page 13 for more details or contact: Angela (member) on 07972 625869 or angelabowie@btinternet.com

Sat 27th Herald Classic Car Show and Rally
Market Square, Alton, GU34 1HD
Rally to start at: 09.30hrs
Car Show arrive by: 10.30am

The day starts with a rally around the local picturesque villages and countryside (free breakdown and recovery service) starting at the Pheasant Inn, Lower Farrington. The duration of the run will be 1 hour. The rally is strictly limited to those who have booked in advance.

For those not wanting to take part in the rally, the static show is in the Market Square.

Breakfast roll/drink can be purchased (prebooked) at the pub before the rally. Each show car will get a FREE coffee. A lunch box can be ordered from a local café and the pub is offering a special 2 course supper for £9.95

All entries must be in by the 20th August..... so fill yours in now!!!!

For more details:

Jan on 01252-613335 or 07730 402202. italcorsa@googlemail.com

OCTOBER

Sat 11th Thatcham Classic Car Show
Dunstan green, Thatcham
10.00am – 4pm

A small friendly Classic Car Show, probably the last outdoor one of the year, a Hot food stand, sweet cart, vintage carousel and for the kids a bouncy castle. Although the show is free, the organisers would like to have some idea of numbers, let me know if you might be able to make it and I will pass the information on

Contact:

Jan on 01252-613335 or 07730 402202. italcorsa@googlemail.com

24th/25th/26th Padova, Italy Classic Car Show & Auto Jumble

Fancy a weekend in Italy? Great Italian food and wine!

And to make it the best weekend ever, a chance to visit one of the largest indoor classic car shows and Auto Jumble in the world. Cheap flights make this a weekend not to miss. Book early to get the cheapest rates.

And the Auto Jumble... well most of the stalls sell Fiat 500's parts.....need I say more. For those not keen on cars, there is a chance to visit Venice or shop in the fantastic market in the centre of Padova.

For details contact:

Jan on 01252-613335 or 07730 402202. italcorsa@googlemail.com

For more details on any events/entry forms etc:

Contact: Jan & Jimmy. Tel: 01252 613335 italcorsa@googlemail.com

or

Vanessa Tel: 01344 772970 v@gathercolevg.freereserve.co.uk

VERNASCA SILVER FLAG. HISTORIC HILL CLIMB. ITALY 2008 (PART 1)

I must start this article on the Silver Flag, with a big thank you to Jan and Jimmy Di-Carlo, for you see, without them, I would not have been able to compete, and had such a trouble free trip.

It started back in the winter months when I was very interested in competing the Liege – Brescia – Liege rally in my 1963 genuine Fiat Abarth 595.

Malcolm McKay was organising this re-run of a rally that took place 50 years ago for micro-cars. I understand that in the original rallies our little cars always finished well and, I think one year a 500 won!

The problem I was having to make this rally was sponsorship, as the entry costs were over £2000. After trying a couple of large Fiat garages for sponsorship, and also offering my car to promote the incoming new 500 in their show rooms, all enquiries proved unsuccessful.

I mentioned this to Jim, and he said why not apply for the Silver Flag hill climb in Italy. I had read an article on this but my understanding was they would only want prestige historic cars i.e.: Maserati's, Ferrari's etc – How wrong I was.

I decided to try for an entry. It is always oversubscribed but I sent my completed forms and photos of the car and waited. Six weeks later my application came through and I was successful. Wow!

I gave my car a test run from Eltham to the Brooklands Auto Italia Italian Car Day along the M25, all seemed fine so there was nothing more to do but wait for the Silver Flag weekend of 28/28/29 June.

Jan Di-Carlo had everything arranged for me and my colleague Andre. I thought that Linda, my wife would be interested, but as she didn't drive we thought it best that I had a co-driver for the trip to Italy.

Jan had booked the hotels in France, arranged maps and lent us high Vis jackets for France. In fact, Jan could not have done more – Thank you Jan.

We met at the Dover Ferry at 08:30am Wednesday and were soon making our way through France.

We travelled down to Troyes for our first stopover. After a cold beer, nice dinner and a friendly chat, we retired for a good nights sleep.

After breakfast we were off to Chambery, our second stop at the Campanile motel chain. Chambery is really the start of the French Alps, so we knew that we were to go only through the Frejus tunnel and on into Italy, then Vernasca.

Jimmy suggested we drove the Fiat over the Alps, but the road was closed, so we all went through the tunnel. “At last, Italy.”



Jim’s Car on the trailer, the Italian side of the Alps.

We continued on until we reached Castell’ Arquato. Jimmy and Jan led us to the paddock, which was lunchtime on Friday 21st. We unloaded our car, packed the trailer and went to collect our door stickers etc. The Italians really do this very well. I was given a bag with a bottle of local wine, a racing car hard back book, door cards, stickers, posters etc. The excitement was beginning to mount when I stuck the door numbers with sponsors on my cars – I was number “2”.

There would be close to 200 cars in 10 groups all running from the start at Castell'Arquato at 30 second intervals through Lugagnano with the finish at Vernasca. Course length 8.5Km with a 300metre climb. Of course the roads are closed to domestic traffic. I was in the Turismo Group, the number 1 car being a Fiat 1100TV 1956 and '*immaculate*'. In all there were 16 cars in my group including a Fiat 595, 850, Giannini, 600 GP2, 1000TC and 1000TCR, Alfa GTAS, Renault R8 Gordini and BMW 2002TI, BMW 3.0CSL.

During the Friday afternoon as more trailers, vans etc were bringing these cars to the event, my little white Fiat Abarth 595 was causing interest with many people, mainly Italians, Most could not speak English, I could not speak Italian but somehow we managed to enjoy each others cars. This really was going to be very special indeed. Roll on Saturday and my first run.....

Andre and I arrived at the Paddock on Saturday 28th June around 9am. Many more cars where in the paddock in fact it was full. My car was next to a bright yellow Fiat 850 all the way from.....Tasmania – what a trip!!

We met with Jimmy and Jan for a coffee in a local Café, and were joined by Roger & David who had ridden down on their motorbikes from England to watch the event.



Jimmy suggested that I got my car ready as the start was underway. I quickly went over to my car, started it and join the other cars in my group. I was running second and they brought us in single file to the start line. Italian commentary is everywhere. It was my turn. The starter was telling all in the start area about my car. Then the flag dropped.....

I was off, the first part of the run is straight and very fast for the high performance cars, in fact it had two man-made chicanes to prevent excess speed ie 150-200mph which the Le-Man's cars would reach. I absolutely thrashed my car with full revs as much as possible. On the first chicane, I was flat out around 70-80mph. I had to brake, double de-clutch, with toe and heel back to third gear through the chicane.

Then back to 4th, then the same procedure at the second chicane, a slight rise on to Lugagnano, hard left hand 90 degree bend, downhill to a roundabout, staying as fast as I could, then the start of the uphill section, twisting around 12 hairpins. Mainly taken in 2nd and 3rd with a lot of double de-clutching and toe and heeling to keep the revs up. The car went very well, screeching around the sharpest bend with the back out on two bends, I found the car under-steered a little at these speeds and bends. Then on to the finish line.

After the race you were gathered in an off road parking area with all in your group. Also a few other groups so you are with them for an hour or so. I had a racing Ferrari Daytona one side of me and a 250 GT SWB, the other, it was a chance to view all the cars and what a collection. When they called us to follow the pace car back to the paddock, we all started our cars, my little Fiat was nearly blown over when the Daytona started with its side exhaust. **Deafening!!**. On the way back I cannot describe the feeling I had it was just euphoric being in such stunning scenery and surrounded by interesting people driving wonderful machinery.

Other cars at this event were:

Ferrari, Lancia, Lola, Jaguar, Frazer Nash O.S.C.A, Astons, Bugatti, Maserati, Lotus, Coopers, Ladonda, Amilcar, Porsche, Mclanen, Ford GT, Cisitalia and on it goes.....

The Lola oh darling! T92 Bowes Indy Ca, T20, T380, T492 etc – all simply stunning.

To be continued.....

FRIMLEY PARK HOSPITAL CHARITY RUN 8TH JUNE 2008

SOME THOUGHTS FROM THE PARTICIPANTS !

- ❖ Didn't we all beam with pride when the public whistled, cheered and waved at the 500's driving in convoy
- ❖ Many thanks to Vanessa for inviting us to her house to meet up before the event... Drinks and chocolate biscuits are always welcome
- ❖ Only down side to the event was the long wait at Frimley, but at least it gave us a chance to look at all the cars, some as old as the very early 1900's
- ❖ Hat off to Steven & Wallace, who, when they found out that there was no food to be brought at the start venue, wandered off to the nearby Waitrose to buy ham & rolls.
- ❖ Well done to John for coming all the way from Southampton in *Bluebell* his Fiat 500



- ❖ I never realised that there were so many Vintage/Classic cars in this area, there must have been over 100 taking part in the run

- ❖ We were sorry that Sheridan and Angela couldn't join us, at the last minute one of their Gamine' refused to start – we understand that the problem is now solved, as they joined us at the Amberley event.... But that is another story
- ❖ The Gamine was not the only 500 to have a small problem on the day, Steven Abbott's car liked the fabulous town of Farnham, so decided to stop in the centre.... only yards from the finishing line. But with a little help he made it – that's the important thing!



He told us the engine got hot and started to kangaroo before cutting out completely. Apparently it's the dynamo overcharging. Wallace took this photo and emailed it to Steven with the caption

“OPPS !, What's it worth NOT to send it to the 500 Club??.”

That's friends for you!!!!

- ❖ The great thing about Fiat 500's is that they can be repaired on the road side unlike modern cars that have to be taken to a garage to be *plugged in!!*
- ❖ It was so nice to see Bev & Mike Fowler out in their little car again. We can confirm to everyone that it IS POSSIBLE to get a standard NHS

wheelchair in the back of a Fiat 500. What is the next challenge that a 500 will rise to??!!!, Nothing much I would say.



- ❖ During the run the 500 were travelling in convoy with 3 Big Red Fiats (or rather should I say Ferrari's), and should I say 'trying to catch up' rather than travelling in convoy!!!. Well we did catch then at the end, just as we arrived in the car park. At the sight of all the '*Fiats*' the crowds swamped around us, we could hardly move less alone park up, for people talking, asking questions etc.
- ❖ Waiting to greet us at the finish were Mark & Karen, and although only a few weeks old, their son was attending his first Fiat 500 event, I hope Mark, that you will remind him of this as he gets older
- ❖ Finally, A Big Round of Applause must go to Amanda and the pink Ladies (her twin daughters) for winning 'Best Entrant' trophy for the day. The girls matched Bubbles - their 500 -, to a tee – they were all in pink. (see back cover).

ITALIAN CAR PICNIC



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ANGELA ON 07972 625869 OR EMAIL @
angelabowie@btinternet.com**

Website: honningtonfarmgardens.co.uk

WOKING HOSPICE CLASSIC CAR SHOW & FAYRE

Spring has arrived, (a bit late) but sunshine cool air and empty roads beckoned as I set off from home towards Winchester and then onto the A 31 North bound (500's don't do Motorways) a great road across the beautiful Hampshire countryside.

Soon I was entering the show in a queue of beautiful classics, so I thought I would ring Jan to locate the 'Team', she answered immediately, not surprising really as she and Jimmy were just 1 car behind me and saw me reach for my phone ("I do use my mirrors"! honestly Officer)

Soon we were parking the cars, raising the gazebo, reorganising the cars and moving the gazebo!!!! All good fun!



Looking around the show it was great to find that most of the cars I have ever owned were represented, Triumphs, T.V.R, Opal Manta, Spitfire, MG Midget etc.

This soon brought the conversation around to what IS a Classic?

Well I guess it must be:

1. Fairly Old, say pre 90's, but preferably before 1972 to be Taxed Historically (free)
2. Interesting, but that could mean anything
3. Loved by its owner, well maybe, but one man's (or woman's) pile of junk is someone else's RESTO' PROJECT.
4. A pleasure to drive. Normally, but a challenge also, NO: power steering, A.B.S or synchromesh just adds to the fun, but a Model T Ford with the accelerator in the middle and hand adjustment for the ignition must need 100% concentration.



How many small *Fiat 500 Enthusiasts* can you fit into a Fiat 500?

Well that's sorted that question then, i.e., we don't know, but if you do then answers on a bank note please!!!

To sum up the occasion. All I can say to absent *500 Enthusiasts* is, you missed a good one.

The warm sunshine, great atmosphere and a 'feel good factor' was everywhere and answering enquiries and listening to "I used to have one of those", type conversations made the time fly & soon we were heading reluctantly home

P.S. Driving home, wrapped in nostalgia, reminded me of some events when I used to 'fix cars' to support my sporting activities

No 1. A guy approached me needing a new engine, he said "No power, slow etc, etc. I removed & oiled the throttle cable £10, instant release of horse power.

No 2. A stranger brought along his Ford Anglia and said it would not restart if left for more than 3 to 4 hours, otherwise it ran perfectly. He was a Door Step Insurance collector and his car was vital for his work, so for the previous TWO MONTHS he had set his alarm for 3 am! And got up in his pyjamas to start and run the engine for 5 minutes, so that it would restart the next morning... Honestly!!

A compression test & strip down showed the piston rings to be totally worn away

We later calculated the engine was being started around 100 times a day and being driven approximately 100 yards each time between customers.... So do you think your car has a hard life?

MEMORY 3. Taking a hump back bridge much too fast is a Hillman Minx with lots of noisy mates in the back, all 4 wheels left the road and bums left their seats, and the chatter and tyre noise ceased in unison. THE SILENCE WAS DEAFENING!!!

Ciao, **John Jenkins**

EVENTS ORGANISER PROFILE

Hello, I'm Ness

I'm a tad mad it has to be said about Fiat 500s but I'm also mad on plenty of other stuff too, as no doubt the Di Carlos will testify. I fly around at 100 mph, have oodles of energy for the Fiat 500 and I can be spotted at summer classic car events in many a mad dress attire which often includes a straw hat of some form, a tee-shirt with a picture of Noddy on it and a handbag in the style of a watering can. I also just recently bought a 1960s pair of sunglasses off EBay to complete the look. Da da!

I've wanted a classic 500 since I was 5 years old and 3 years ago my dream came true when I took delivery of a red 1967, model F, Fiat 500. It was delivered to my house on the back of a car transporter at 7.30am on a Sunday morning. It had travelled all the way down from Derby. I instantly fell in love with it and after having the 'fundamentals' checked (were the sills and wheels in tact or about to fall off??) by someone in the know to make sure it wasn't a 'lemon', I handed over the reddie and named it 'Noddy'. I mean, what other name do you give to a car that looks like it's just driven down from Toytown?!



3 years later, and after much tender loving care by the one and only Jimmy Di Carlo of ItalCorsa fame (and the Fiat 500 Enthusiast Club's Technical Advisor), Noddy was nursed back to decent mechanical health (Nod had been sitting in a guy's garage for 10 years and had covered about 20 miles in that time) and is now my pride and joy – BIG TIME. So much so that I built/created a shrine, yes, a shrine, to the Fiat 500 at my place of work. I work for lawyers in a legal department within a large blue chip international software company and even the MD has never uttered a bad word about my shrine. 'She' puts her eyes in the heavens whenever she sees me and just says ..."Vanessa, I will never understand your passion but just carry on doing it – it's great". She never complains either if, on the odd summer's day, when I drive Noddy to work for a day out I park it next to her Porsche Boxster in the company car park!



My shrine is quite a talking point when staff come to see the lawyers and instead of seeing a pack of deadbeat lawyers to badmouth at (they've come round to either complain that their contract is late, hasn't been signed etc. etc.) they are confronted instead by oodles (and I mean – oodles!!!) of pictures of Fiat 500s – and piccies of Noddy of course. Their anger instantly melts and they start talking about 'old cars' with me. Barriers instantly melt. People are fascinated that a girl has such an interest in old cars. I don't find it strange at all as I've always had a very keen interest in classic cars, since I was very small girl, but the 500 always 'did it for me'. I know there are plenty of other girlie 500 owners out there too! We aren't unusual, are we girls? – We are just unique!

Amongst my other hobbies I have a particular passion for boats and animals. I have been a member of the same sailing club since I was born (my father enrolled me along with my mother, brother and sister at a newly formed sailing club all those years ago) and when I'm not out on the road with Noddy it's known for me to be out on the water, sailing) and I am a RSPCA volunteer.

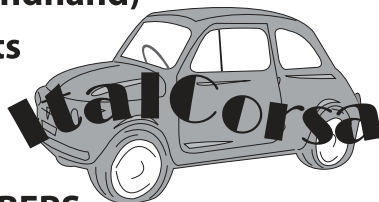
So, here I am today as your Events organiser for the new Fiat 500 Enthusiasts Club.

I'm here to listen to YOU, the owners. If there is something you want to tell me about, if you want to let me know what's going on or simply give me an idea of what you and your family members would like to do with your 500 – then tell me!!!! Get in touch with me by email on v@gathercolevg.freerve.co.uk or drop me a text on 07843 067333.

Ta taa!!!



- Fiat 500 spares (new / secondhand)
- Performance tuning & parts
- Engine & Gearbox rebuild
- All at super low prices
- DISCOUNTS TO CLUB MEMBERS



T/F: 01252-613335 • E: italcorsa@googlemail.com

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